

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An in-line egg labelling system for applying a label on eggs travelling into grippers of a conveyor, said system comprising at least one labelling device mounted beneath said conveyor and provided with a label applying arm for applying a label on an exposed area of the surface of said eggs.
2. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 1, wherein said exposed egg surface area is facing generally downwards.
3. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 1 wherein said conveyor is part of an egg packing and grading system comprising a controller and wherein each travelling egg has a destination.
4. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 3 further comprising a computerised labelling control system and a user interface for the automatic individual selection of the eggs to be labelled on the basis of at least one user set parameter and at least one input parameter communicated by said controller.
5. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 4, wherein said at least one input parameter indicates a destination for each travelling egg.
6. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 4, wherein said at least one user set parameter comprises a parameter specifying for which destinations eggs are to be labelled.

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5 7. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 4, wherein said at least one user set parameter comprises a first parameter specifying for which destinations eggs are to be labelled, and a second parameter specifying a desired ratio for the number of labelled eggs/number of packed eggs at a destination.

10 8. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 4, wherein said labelling control system and interface further perform generation and output of statistical data about labelling activities carried out by the labelling system.

15 9. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 1, further comprising at least one sensing device for travelling egg position monitoring.

10. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 1, further comprising an egg surface drying device.

20 11. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 10, wherein said drying device comprises an air stream generating device.

25 12. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 1, wherein said labelling system further comprises at least one label smoothing device for applying a slight pressure on applied labels to promote adhesion and proper conforming of labels to egg surfaces.

13. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 12, wherein said label smoothing device comprises a brush member.

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14. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 12, wherein said label smoothing device comprises a roller member.

5 15. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 12,
wherein said label smoothing device comprises at least one air jet.

16. An inline egg labelling system as recited in claim 1,
wherein said conveyer comprises two parallel longitudinal rows of grippers
and said labelling system comprises two labelling devices, each one being
dedicated to the labelling of eggs transported by a specific row of grippers.

17. An in-line egg labelling system as recited in claim 1,
wherein said conveyer comprises three parallel longitudinal rows of
grippers and said labelling system comprises three labelling devices, each
one being dedicated to the labelling of eggs transported by a specific row
of grippers.

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